



## **MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **BODY PIERCING AND TATTOOING PROHIBITED**

**Effective Date:** May 2, 2005

**Policy #:** IC-17

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- I. PURPOSE:** To prevent risk of infection or other physical or emotional harm to patients from body piercing or tattooing during hospitalization.
- II. POLICY:** Hospital personnel will not arrange or assist patients in obtaining body piercings or tattoos. Every effort will be made to prevent or discourage patients from piercing or tattooing themselves. Staff will use various educational approaches to inform patients of the risks associated with these procedures and the reason for the prohibition.
- III. DEFINITIONS:**
  - A. Body Piercing – To have a body part pierced in order to have jewelry affixed to the body in the hole that is made.
  - B. Tattoo – A design on the skin made by pricking and staining.
- IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

All Staff – To enforce the policy and to educate patients about risks and hazards associated with body piercing and tattooing.
- V. PROCEDURE:**

Treatment teams will deny requests by patients to have body parts pierced. Patients will not routinely be permitted to access items that could be used for body piercing.

Treatment teams will deny requests for tattoos, unless clinically indicated to alter an existing tattoo that is deemed offensive and harmful to the individual's psychiatric or social functioning. Staff will try to restrict patient access to items that could be used by an individual for tattooing.

Patient education procedures will be utilized to inform patients of the risks of these procedures and the reason for the prohibition.

Tattoo removal procedures may be authorized when clinically indicated.
- VI. REFERENCES:** None

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**XII. ATTACHMENTS:** None

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Thomas Gray Date  
Medical Director